



January 31, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-146A The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
House Appropriations Committee
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Cc: Chairwoman Tammy Baldwin, Chairwoman Patty Murray, Senator John Hoeven, Senator Roy Blunt, Chairman Sanford D. Bishop, Congressman Andy Harris, Congressman Tom Cole

Dear Chair Leahy, Ranking Member Shelby, Chair DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger,

We understand the critical nature of addressing issues of food security and nutrition as drivers of health, economic, and social well-being, and deeply appreciate the actions Congress has taken thus far to address the unprecedented hunger crisis brought on by COVID-19. Millions of children and adults are struggling with hunger and the federal nutrition programs have been a crucial lifeline for families who have fallen on hard times and are having trouble putting food on the table. It is imperative that Congress allocate adequate funding to ensure uninterrupted and timely benefits are delivered to those most in need.

As you consider your Fiscal Year 2022 priorities, the Alliance to End Hunger* strongly urges the following recommendations to alleviate hunger in America:

- **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): \$6.278 billion**
Appropriators have extended the successful increase in WIC's fruit and vegetable benefits in two continuing resolutions and should sustain this WIC benefit bump for the remainder of the fiscal year. Overall funding should be inclusive of annual set-aside priorities, including \$90 million for breastfeeding peer counselors, \$14 million for infrastructure and special project grants, and \$75 million to replenish the fund for management information systems.
 - **WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP): \$30 million**
Since 1992, the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program has strengthened connections

between nutrition programs and agriculture by providing WIC families with a small annual benefit to redeem at local farmers markets or farm stands. After years of flat funding, a small increase in fiscal year 2021 allowed new states to start WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Programs. Congress should strengthen this program and support even more states in establishing programs through additional investment.

- **Include report language to revise WIC food packages.**

Appropriators should include report language that directs USDA to, this fiscal year, revise the WIC food packages to increase their overall value while maintaining their science-based framework. USDA is equipped to make these revisions based on the 2017 National Academies of Sciences report and the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. USDA should be directed to provide issuance above the cost-neutral recommendations of the 2017 report to best meet the nutrition needs of WIC participants.

- **Extend United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Waiver Authority**

Congress should extend USDA's authority to issue nationwide waiver authority through school year 2022-2023 to help child nutrition providers overcome operational challenges created by the pandemic. Waivers allow school nutrition programs, local government agencies, and nonprofit organizations to adapt as necessary to changes such as school closures and supply chain disruptions. These previously authorized waivers proved to be crucial in ensuring access to nutrition for children and are set to expire on June 30, 2022. This deadline means that summer meal programs will be unable to operate under the same program rules throughout the summer and doesn't allow USDA to respond to challenges child nutrition providers may face at the start of the new school year.

- **Summer Meals: No less than \$75 million**

Allocate a minimum of \$75 million for expanded Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Demonstration Projects. This will provide families with an additional grocery benefit over the summer and ensures that children in rural and underserved areas have access to nutrition during the summer.

- **Maintain the effectiveness of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

Add language to protect against potential appropriations shortfalls, such as "provide such sums as are necessary to ensure continuity of SNAP operations and benefits."

- **The Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Program: No less than \$1.387 billion**

We are requesting that the OAA Nutrition Program be funded at a minimum of \$1,387,773,000 as proposed by the House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies subcommittee, an increase from the FY 2021 enacted level. Prior to the pandemic, federal funding for the national network failed to keep pace with increasing demand, rising costs and inflation. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, local nutrition programs, like Meals on Wheels, have proven to be even more essential to addressing the issues of senior hunger and social isolation. Increased funding will help provide the levels needed for community-based nutrition programs to reach older adults in need of services, especially as the demand for these essential services and costs of operating continue to rise.

- **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): \$1 billion**
 - **TEFAP Commodities: \$900 million**

Congress should provide \$900 million for TEFAP food purchases to ensure food banks and emergency food providers are able to better meet high demand. This also will mitigate the cliff effect from the reduction of food coming through the Food Purchase and Distribution Program.
 - **TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds: \$100 million**

Congress should appropriate the fully authorized amount of \$100 million for TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds. These funds help cover costs associated with distributing TEFAP commodities to emergency food providers and help defray the costs of storing, transporting, and distributing TEFAP foods.
- **Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP): a minimum of \$334 million**

Appropriators should allocate no less than \$334 million and we respectfully request your consideration of providing additional funds due to increasing food costs. Over the last fiscal year, CSFP packages experienced a significant increase in cost per box and these costs are not expected to decline in FY 2022. Additional funding is needed to meet the needs of older adults who are struggling with hunger during the pandemic.
- **White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger and Health: \$2-3 million**

The proposed conference would seek to create a real plan, with benchmarks, for ending hunger and reducing food insecurity and diet-related disease in the United States. The conference would bring together government agencies, the anti-hunger advocacy community, food banks, hospitals, nonprofits, educators, farmers and ranchers, individuals with lived experiences, and other key stakeholders, to develop comprehensive policy solutions that address weaknesses in the food supply chain that result in food deserts and poor access to healthy foods for certain communities.

Respectfully,



Eric Mitchell
Executive Director
Alliance to End Hunger

**The Alliance to End Hunger is a coalition of nearly 100 members—corporations, non-profits, faith-based organizations, universities, foundations, international organizations, and individuals—with a shared conviction that addressing hunger is essential.*

Alliance to End Hunger Organizational Members:

Corporate

Amazon
American Peanut Council
Bank of America
Cantera Partners
Cargill, Inc.
Corteva Agriscience
DoorDash
GrainPro
HEB
Instacart
Nuro

Non-Profit

1,000 Days
A Place at the Table
AARP
Association for International Agriculture and Rural
Development (AIARD)
Black Women's Health Imperative
The Breadfruit Institute
Congressional Hunger Center
Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA)
Edesia
The Farmlink Project
Feeding America
Food Enterprise Solutions
Food Rescue Hero
FoodFinder
GIVN
Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF)
The Global FoodBanking Network
Global Volunteers
Growing Hope Globally
Helping Hands Community
Helping the Hungry Virtually
The Hunger Project
Hungry Harvest
InterAction
March of Dimes
Meals on Wheels America
MEANS Database
Move For Hunger
National Farmers Union
National FFA Organization

National WIC Association
One Acre Fund
Opportunity International
The Outreach Program
Penny Appeal USA
Poetry X Hunger
ProMedica
RESULTS
Rise Against Hunger
The Root Cause Coalition
SAHAVE
Save the Children
Seed Programs International
Share Our Strength - No Kid Hungry
Souper Bowl of Caring
Trees for the Future
World Food Program USA

Faith-Based

Bread for the World
Christian Connections for International Health
Church World Service (CWS)
Convoy of Hope
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ECLA)
ICNA Relief
Islamic Relief USA
Lutheran World Relief
MAZON - A Jewish Response to Hunger
Partners Worldwide
Society of St. Andrew
World Renew

University

Auburn University
Maxwell | Syracuse University
Walsh University

Foundation

AARP Foundation
Eleanor Crook Foundation
Farm Journal Foundation
GlobalWorks Foundation
SODEXO Stop Hunger Foundation

Alliance to End Hunger policy priorities are developed through consultation with the Alliance's Advocacy Committee. This letter is signed by the Alliance to End Hunger as an organization and does not necessarily reflect official views of the Alliance's individual members.